

Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-10

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SUBJ: SECOND US-VENEZUELAN SYMPOSIUM

1. THE AMBASSADOR AND DCM MET ON JUNE 10 WITH HANS NEUMANN OF THE MONTANA FINANCIAL GROUP AND NEUMANN FOUNDATION WHO IS SPEARING THE VENEZUELAN RESPONSE TO THE BOSTON SYMPOSIUM. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT GOV LEADERS, INCLUDING THE FOREIGN MINISTER, ASKED NEUMANN TO SET UP A RETURN SYMPOSIUM IN VENEZUELA. HIS COMMENTS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT FOLLOW:

2. (A) PRIOR ORGANIZATION

A SPECIAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE WILL BE FORMED HERE IN JULY AND IS TO BE HEADED BY FORMER AMBASSADOR ENRIQUE TEJERA PARIS.

(B) TIMING

THE PRINCIPAL QUESTION CURRENTLY AT ISSUE IS WHETHER TO HOLD THE SYMPOSIUM IN LATE NOVEMBER OR EARLY JANUARY. NEUMANN LEANS TOWARD DATES BETWEEN JANUARY 7 AND 20 ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE CHANCES OF OBTAINING SIGNIFICANT U.S. CONGRESSIONAL PARTICIPATION WOULD BE BETTER THEN. HE ALSO HAS IN MIND THE FACT THAT VIASA IS GENERALLY IN SLACK SEASON AFTER JANUARY

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7 AND MIGHT THEREFORE BE PREVAILED UPON TO ASSIST

WITH THE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL.

(C) VENUE

NEUMANN IS THINKING OF A THREE-DAY MEETING, TWO DAYS IN CIUDAD GUAYANA AND THE FINAL DAY IN CARACAS FOR SOCIALIZING AND THE WINDUP. HE BELIEVES THE FORMER LOCATION WOULD REMOVE THE PROCEEDINGS FROM THE EYE OF THIS CITY'S PERSISTENT AND AGGRESSIVE MEDIA.

(D) PARTICIPATION

NEUMANN FAVORS HAVING ABOUT THIRTY PARTICIPANTS FROM THE U.S. AND ABOUT FORTY FROM VENEZUELA, THE LATTER FIGURE TO INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NORTH AMERICAN-VENEZUELAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. HE WANTS TO DOWN-PLAY PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATION THIS TIME AROUND IN ORDER TO STEER AWAY FROM THE SENSITIVE ISSUE OF THE MULTINATIONALS AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, TO SIMPLIFY THE JOB OF SELECTING VENEZUELAN PARTICIPANTS. HIS PARTICULAR INTEREST IS IN ATTENDANCE FROM THE U.S. CONGRESS, PERHAPS AS MANY AS SIX OR SEVEN. HE ALSO STRESSED PRIVATE ACADEMIC AND USG EXECUTIVE BRANCH PARTICIPATION. IN THE LATTER REGARD, HE MENTIONED SECRETARY MORTON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS AND DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LUERS.

(E) EXPENSES

NEUMANN SAID THAT THE VENEZUELAN GROUP WOULD COVER ALL LOCAL COSTS, INCLUDING TRAVEL TO CIUDAD GUAYANA, BUT IT WOULD NEED HELP WITH THE INTERNATIONAL AIR FARES OF "PRIVATE" U.S. PARTICIPANTS. THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION HAVE LET HIM KNOW THAT NO FUNDING WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM THOSE SOURCES FOR THIS ROUND.

3. THE AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED THE DESIRABILITY OF THOROUGH AND TIMELY ADVANCE PREPARATIONS. HE SAID IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT ANY USG FUNDS COULD BE FOUND FOR THE PROJECT BUT ASSURED NEUMANN OF OUR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DESIRE OTHERWISE TO COOPERATE IN MAKING THIS SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESS.
SHLAUDEMAN

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